THE WIND ON THE HEATH

BALLADS AND LYRICS

By MAY BYRON

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THE WIND ON THE HEATH

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BALLADS AND LYRICS

BY

MAY BYRON

" There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever!"

LAVENGRO

HODDER & STOUGHTON
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THE WIND ON THE HEATH

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M. B.

THE BALLAD OF LONDON RIVER

From the Cotswolds, from the Chilterns, from
your fountains and your springs,
Flow down, O London River, to the sea
gull's silver wings:
Isis or Ock or Thame,
Forget your olden name,
And the lilies and the willows and the weirs
from which you came.

Forgo your crystal shallows and your limpid,
lucid wave,
When the swallows dart and glisten, where
the purple blooms are brave,
For the city's dust and din,
For the city's slime and sin,
For the toil and sweat of Englishmen with
all the world to win.

The stately towers and turrets are the chil-
dren of a day:
You see them lift and vanish by your im-
memorial way:

The Saxon and the Dane,
They dared your deeps in vain —
The Roman and the Norman — they are past,
but you remain.

Your Water-Gate stands open o'er your
turbid tide's unrest,
To welcome home your children from the
East and from the West,
O'er every ocean hurl'd,
Till the tattered sails are furl'd,
In the avenue of Empire, in the highway of
the world.

The argosies of Egypt, the golden fleets of
Ind,
In streaming flocks and coveys they beat
adown the wind:
Heavy with priceless stores,
They hover to your doors,
They lay their lordly merchandise on your
insatiate shores.

The gallant boy you beckon: to his eager
eyes a-gleam
You vaunt your ancient glory, and you haunt
his waking dream:

His leaping veins you fire,
His valiant hopes inspire,
And he woos you for the pathway to his utmost heart's desire.

You draw him to his destiny, you lure him to his fate:
With tales of old adventure his soul you subjugate,
With sounds of quay and creek,
And the ripple gray and sleek,
And the rough winds in the rat-lines where they pipe their summons bleak.

He sees the wharf and shipyard, the mooring-post and crane,
The dock-bridge swinging open, the bollard and the chain:
All day the hammers ring,
All night the flare-lights fling
Their tremulous arms of welcome to the pilgrims that you bring.

Long magic hours he gazes from the Bridge's middle arch,
At the masts in thronging medley, at the sea hosts on the march,

Whether crowding side by side,
Comes the pageant of your pride,
Or you turn your traffic seaward at the falling
of the tide.

The red-sailed barges stagger where the
seething vapours crawl,
The towering clippers pierce the fog beyond
the dim dock wall,
And the steamers each to each
Cry out in strident speech,
And the liners hoot and bellow through the
murk of Limehouse Reach.

He sees forgotten navies in their triumphs
and despairs —
King George's ships, King Charles's ships,
are moored by Blackwall Stairs:
The men whose boisterous breath
Acclaimed Elizabeth,
Their gusty cheering rings to him from out
the doors of death.

So you drag him out and onward, so you cast
him from the shore,
Till he lose the last wan glimmer of the light-
ship off the Nore:

To him, to him alone,
'Neath empty skies unknown,
The sea shall show her sorrows, and her joy shall be his own.

Then you call him, call him, call him, from the ultimate ends of earth,
You wrench his heart with hunger for the city of his birth:
And his senses you befool,
Till in Rio or Stamboul
He hears the roar of London and the shoutings in the Pool.

And the vessel hurries homeward under sun and under stars,
She flies, all canvas crowded, or she drifts beneath bare spars,
Till the rattling cordage creak,
And the whistling block shall speak,
And the groaning yards make answer, Lo, the haven that we seek!

The squalors and the splendours that have girt you as you go,
The majesty and meanness, your sons again shall know,

While the grinding hawser slips,
And the falling anchor grips,
And they haul the huddled foresail down in London of the Ships.

* * * * *

From the Cotswolds, from the Chilterns, from your fountains and your springs,
Flow down, O royal river, unpollute of earthly things:
Through the city's dust and din,
Through the city's slime and sin,
Hail us for fighting Englishmen, with all the world to win!

Then swing us to the surges, through the hurricane to grope,
With iron ills to grapple, with crushing odds to cope;
One with your flood are we,
Blood of your blood we be,
Beating eternal measure still to the pulses of the sea.

The leaves were blowing red and brown
Beneath the beech trees bare,
When the Dark Maid came to our town
With gold pins in her hair.

Her eyes were like a forest pool,
Her lips they were so sweet,
Every man put aside his tool,
To watch her down the street.

The leaves were blowing yellow and gray,
In the waning of the moon,
When the Dark Maid came along the way
With silver-buckled shoon.

Her mantle fell like folds of mist,
That rift and shift and change:
Was never wandering lutanist
That played a tune so strange.

The leaves were blowing crimson and gold,
The wind was like a sigh
That sobs across a ferny wold
Before the raindrops fly.

And none beheld her whence she came,
Or knew the way she went,
Our hearts being stirred to smouldering flame
Of tenderest discontent.

The leaves were blowing ash and dun
Athwart the edge of night,
When the Dark Maid toward the setting sun
Sang herself out of sight.

And every man, from marvel roused,
Took up his toil again;
How should that fairy joy be housed
In homes of mortal men?

But still against a singing wind
In dreams we follow her —
The Dark Maid never looks behind,
That plays the dulcimer.

My child is mine.
Blood of my blood, flesh of my flesh is he,
Rocked on my breast and nurtured at my knee,
Fed with sweet thoughts ere ever he drew breath,
Wrested in battle through the gates of death.
With passionate patience is my treasure hoarded,
And all my pain with priceless joy rewarded.

My child is mine.
Nay, but a thousand thousand powers of ill
Dispute him with me: lurking wolf-like still
In every covert of the ambushed years.
Disease and danger dog him: foes and fears
Bestride his path, with menace fierce and stormy.
Help me, O God! these are too mighty for me!

My child is mine.
But pomp and glitter of the garish world
May wean him hence; while, tenderly unfurled

Like a spring leaf, his delicate, spotless days
Open in blinding sunlight. And the blaze
Of blue and blossom, scents and songs at riot,
May woo him from my wardenship of quiet.

My child is mine.
Yet all his gray forefathers of the past
Challenge the dear possession: they o'ercast
His soul's clear purity with dregs and lees
Of vile unknown ancestral impulses:
And viewless hands, from shadowy regions groping,
With dim negation frustrate all my hoping.

My child is mine.
By what black fate, what ultimate doom accurs'd,
Shall be that radiant certainty revers'd?
Though hell should thrust its fiery gulfs between,
Though all the heaven of heavens should intervene,
Bound with a bond not God himself will sever,
The babe I bore is mine for ever and ever.
My child is mine.

With the north-east wind the soul is fain to
fight as an armed man —
The joy of combat is ours at least, and let
him conquer who can:
Let the strenuous warfare be swift and brief
or weary and long to win,
Who meetly wrestles with foe so fell, may
surely rejoice therein.

In the north-west wind there is colour and
light — from over the hills it comes,
With blare of horns and blazon of clouds, with
music of fifes and drums:
Cold and sweet from the morning blue, and
keen from the purple height,
It lifts aloft the triumphing soul on the sweep
of its pinions bright.

But oh, the whispering south-west wind, all
dewy with latent rains,
From the heather lands and the forest boughs
enmeshed with gossamer chains —

That laughs and sighs from the sunset-red,
that blows from the wild gray sea,
The south-west wind with its dreams of the
dead is breaking the heart in me.

Always there is a tiny song
  That trickles down the trees —
Small dropping notes, not loud nor long,
  Like other melodies;
But soft, reluctant sounds, half heard,
That utterance of some unknown bird.

And I have hunted in and out,
  And searched, all times and tides,
And lurked the woodland ways about,
  That simple singer hides,
Nor stirs a feather: nought shall scare
Him from his secret sojourn there.

And there is one in every wood
  Who sings there day by day:
It almost might be understood
  The thing he strives to say,
As though some child were at one's gate,
Sweet, plaintive, inarticulate.

Whereby I know, in leafy tents,
  Awhile invisible,
A flight of Holy Innocents
  On this green earth do dwell.

That bird-babe with those notes divine,
He may be yours — he may be mine.

Hark! where the topmost branches soar,
  It drips like April rain,
The little voice that never more
  You thought to hear again,
Until you catch the trick of tone,
And know the singer for your own.

Yet speak not, lest you break the charm —
  Stand silent in the dew,
And reach not out your empty arm
  To clasp him unto you.
Patience! Perhaps, if you keep still,
He will come down . . . I think he will.

The song of the sea-adventurers, that never
were known to fame,
The roving, roistering mariners that builded
our England's name:
Foolhardy, reckless, undaunted,
Death they courted and taunted:
In the jaws of hell their flag they flaunted,
answering flame with flame.

An endless pageant of power and pride, they
steer from the long-ago,
From quays that moulder beneath the tide,
from cities whose walls lie low:
Carrack and sloop and galley,
Out of the dark they rally,
As homing birds over hill and valley, back to
the land they know.

The crews of the Bristol Guinea-men, that
traded to Old Calabar,
Fading for years out of English ken in swel-
tering seas afar;

The Danes and the Dutch they raced there,
The Brandenburgers they chased there,
They bid the Portingale cargoes waste there, under an evil star.

Their ships came back from the Cameroons, ragged and patched and old,
With decks roof-thatched from the Accra noons — but down in their sultry hold,
Battened from wind and weather,
Were coral and ostrich feather,
Jasper and ivory heaped together, amber and dust of gold.

The Greenland skippers that speared the whale at the edge of the grinding floe,
Icicles fringing sheet and sail, and decks in a smother of snow:
Men of Clyde and of Humber,
Cold is their Arctic slumber,
But their deeds of daring that none may number shall live while the north winds blow.

The stately captains of barque and brig, in the days of the good Queen Anne;
Under each powdered periwig was the brain of a sea-bred man.

Was there work to be done? they did it:
Was there danger? they pressed amid it:
Wounded to death, with a smile they hid it,
and perished as sailors can.

The filibusters of Tudor years, that held the ocean in fee,
The buccaneers and the privateers, the outlawed sons of the sea:
Terrible, swift, unsleeping,
Like bolts from the azure leaping,
Like birds of prey on their quarry sweeping,
foraging far and free.

The pigtailed bo's'ns of Anson and Cook, and the seafaring men they led —
Who has counted in song or book the roll of those glorious dead?
On the desolate isles uncharted
Their valorous souls departed:
They fought — they fell — and in death, blithe-hearted, cheered as the foeman fled.

The men that talked with a Devon twang, as they hoisted the sails of Drake —
All through the West their rumour rang, the pride of the Dons to break,

Fierce to seize and to sunder
The golden argosies' plunder,
The New World's dread and the Old World's wonder, splendid for England's sake.

The coasting-craft and the fishing-craft, lugger and ketch and hoy,
With a duck-gun fore and a blunderbuss aft, served by a man and a boy;
Their tiny armaments flinging
On frigate and gun-boat — bringing
Prizes and prisoners home with singing, fired with a desperate joy.

Ruffed to the chin, or laced to the knee, or stripped to the waist for fight,
Herding the alien hordes of the sea to fields of defeat and flight,
Or, lit by the lightning's flashing,
Close-hauled through the hurricane thrashing,
With decks a-wash and with spars a-crashing, they swoop on the reeling sight.

The sea-dogs sturdy, the sea-hawks bold, that were never known to fame —
The grim adventurers, young and old, that builded our England's name —

Over the waters of dreaming,
Their bows are rocking and gleaming,
To the sun unsetting their flag is streaming,
answering flame with flame.

TIGER LILY

When the twilight of the sunset meets the
twilight of the dawn,
And a trail of subtle fragrance through the
cloudy night is drawn,
Tiger-lily,
Do you go a-hunting, hunting, in the sombre
boskage black,
Are there rent and mangled blossoms here and
there upon your track,
Tiger-lily?

Do your stamens turn to eyes then, and your
anthers into claws,
And your flaming orange petals into fiercely-
foaming jaws,
Tiger-lily?
Are your leaves transformed to splendours of
a fur bestriped with gold,
Crouching deadly in the shadows, lurking
dreadful round the fold,
Tiger-lily?

The white Madonna lily, she has tears upon
her face;
Does she tremble with the terror of the mid-
night and the chase,
Tiger-lily?

The fragile amber lilies, dainty children of a day,
Do you hunt their flying blossoms with a thirst to seize and slay,
Tiger-lily?

When the delicate morning breezes call the lilies from their sleep,
Through the furtive leafy byways, swift and stealthy, home you creep,
Tiger-lily;
You are poised alert, barbaric, spreading petals one by one —
Is it dew that drips and drops there, shining scarlet in the sun,
Tiger-lily?

THE TURRET

There is a little turret roofed with gold,
A corner of my castle in the air;
And often, when the wintry world's a-cold,
I climb and taste eternal summer there:
For roses thro' the lattice laugh and lean,
And all the ceiling is of tender blue —
The walls are leaves, the floor is mossy-green —
And in the happy twilight, there are you!

There is a little turret veiled in mist,
And tapestried with dreams of days gone by,
Where in the silence we have clasped and kissed,
And none might blame, nor hinder, nor deny.
How did you find the hidden postern gate,
That lets you through upon the secret stair?
For never yet have I had need to wait —
Before the door is opened, you are there.

There is a little turret lapt in fire,
And wrapt about with red of living flame,
Where, at the pinnacle of heart's desire,

Breathless we two have named each
other's name.
And then it crashes, crumbling — then the
dust
And smoke are dim above its ruins
bare: . . .
I build it up again — I can — I must! —
Come back unto our castle in the air!

ALDEBARAN

Like a fire in the field of night,
I saw the Red Star shine,
The Red Star, the gypsy star,
And I claimed its light for mine:
The watcher by the flame,
The guide o'er moor and fen,
That beckoning waves his rosy torch
For wild and wandering men.

Like a disc of the ruddy gold,
I saw the Red Star gleam,
The Red Star, the gypsy star,
That roves in the roads of dream:
Across the empty years
He flung his spendthrift store,
As a Romany plays with handfuls bright,
In the shade of the low tent door.

Like a horseshoe in the forge,
I saw the Red Star glow,
The Red Star, the gypsy star,
Whose trail the vagabonds know:

Beating the bounds of earth,
  Beneath the alien skies,
They wend with joy in their homeless hearts
  Who have seen the Red Star rise.

REINCARNATION

In lonely ways of dim, forgotten lands,
Ah, do you not recall how once we went?
Did we not gaze, and hold each other's hands,
In utter ecstasy of sheer content?
And as for what we said — we said but nothing:
The naked truth was ours, that needs no clothing.

Strange flowers were near us — nameless to me now —
And strange old cities — were they quick or dead?
We met — we two — the when or why or how
Matters no more. That golden hour is fled,
But ineffaceable its glory lingers,
As melodies survive their primal singers.

And you? The moment eyes encountered eyes,
Yours were alight with memories and with dreams.
You are mine, all mine: you know it. Oh, be wise!
Ere over all our past the present streams,
And snaps our secret chains of joy and wonder,
And whelms and whirls us, impotent, asunder.

REINCARNATION

Listen. In visions I will come to-night
And seek with you those old mysterious lands,
And we shall see, in the gray, uncertain light —
Do you remember? — where the temple stands,
The desolate temple of some faith unknown,
The sunset fading on its solemn stone.

And we will never leave those lands again,
But all that should have been for us, shall be:
Reality foregone, dreams shall remain,
And sweet oblivion cover you and me.
Dare all, renounce all — come! . . . I do not doubt you —
I who have waited centuries without you.

THE FOLD

When God shall ope the gates of gold,
The portals of the heavenly fold,
And bid His flock find pasture wide
Upon a new earth's green hill-side —

What poor strayed sheep shall thither fare,
Black-smirched beneath the sunny air,
To wash away in living springs
The mud and mire of earthly things!

What lonely ewes with eyes forlorn,
With weary feet and fleeces torn,
To whose shorn back no wind was stayed,
Nor any rough ways smooth were made!

What happy little lambs shall leap
To those sad ewes and spattered sheep,
With gamesome feet and joyful eyes,
From years of play in Paradise!

The wind is chill, the hour is late;
Haste thee, dear Lord, undo the gate;
For grim wolf-sorrows prowling range
These bitter hills of chance and change:

And from the barren wilderness
With homeward face Thy flocks do press:
Their worn bells ring a jangled chime —
Shepherd, come forth, 'tis eventime!

MOTHER NIGHT

Unloose the cloudy mantle
  That wraps thy sweetness round,
And in its folds of shadow
  Let me be softly wound:
And clasp me to thy bosom,
  That so thine eyes' deep light
May stream unseen above me,
  Mother Night!

Thine arms about my shoulders,
  Thy fingers in my hair,
Dismiss the gaudy pageant,
  The day's dull noise and glare:
For thou alone art real,
  And thou alone canst right
The wrongs of all the weary,
  Mother Night!

And here from every trouble
  Abides the resting-place,
The ever-ready solace,
  The ever-true embrace:

With keys of dream, O dearest,
  Unlock the world's delight,
Hide me in heavenly secrets,
  Mother Night!

NOCTURNE

When leaf-sweet silence held the moonlit vale,
The nightingale
Suddenly spoke
Out of the heart of his accustomed oak.

The garrulous bird-chorus of the day
Had sunk away:
None called, or cooed,
Or carolled to his brown wide-throated brood.

Alone the ring-dove on her scanty nest,
Taking no rest,
Felt the eggs stir,
And little thrills of life move under her.

Also the long grass, drinking deep of dew,
Slept not, but grew,
Clean, tall, and straight,
Ready to topple with its own lush weight.

These three were ware, none other waking
nigh,
When down the sky,
A golden boat,
The moon dropped anchor into deeps remote.

These three, the singer and the listeners, felt
The shadows melt,
The darkness turn
Toward the dim dawning: when the great king-fern

That rules the shallows by the brown wood-pond
Lifted each frond
To its full height,
To gain the first faint glimpse of new-made light.

THE FAIRY EXODUS

Under the light of the waning moon,
  Where the alder and elder lean,
The fairies trampled with soundless shoon,
  And cloaks as the ash-leaf green.

Like quicken-berries their caps were red;
  They splashed through the dewdrops cold,
With lithe arms waving o'er elfin head,
  And glitter of gleaming gold.

I lay in the mosses to see them go —
  They lured me with music wild;
But the heart that is smitten with mortal woe
  Was never by fays beguiled.

Yet the last of them whispered "Awake!
    Rejoice!
  Come follow our steps — be wise!"
And oh! she spoke in my true love's voice,
  And looked from my lost love's eyes.

["When a child is born among the Thracians, all its kindred sit round about it in a circle, and weep for the woes it will have to undergo, now that it has come into the world, making mention of every ill that falls to the lot of man."—"Terpsichore." 4.]

They all came round thy cradle, little brown head,
Bringing their shrill forebodings of disaster;
Bent crone and barren beldame, how they sped,
Each with the dreariest tale her tongue could master!
But thou and I
Cared not: they would be silent by and by.

The heroes of thy kindred, little brown head,
Bearing a burden deep of lamentation,
Wept as they spoke: the maidens newly-wed,

Trembling, declared thy dark predestination:
But I and thou
Lay hushed, close, close together, even as now.

Ah me! but when they had left us, little brown head,
The Ills that they had summoned lingered after;
On every side I heard the stealthy tread,
The wailing voices and the mocking laughter;
I saw them creep
And lay malignant looks upon thy sleep.

For Care stopped low above thee, little brown head,
And Pain caressed thee on the hands and feet,
And Fear's black shadow filled the dusk with dread,
And Famine breathed on thee — my sweet, my sweet!
And Grief, who knelt
Against thy side — her very tears I felt.
And False Love smiling faintly, little brown head,

And Broken Hope that turns the world
to gall,
And Sickness, and Despair — I saw them
spread
Their malison o'er thee that art my all;
Impotent, still,
I lay and listened: they must have their will.

Last of all, Death — not fearful, little brown
head,
But like a hooded mother, soft and dim,
Drew near with rustling garments, and did
shed
Clear drops of blessing o'er thine every
limb —
Death, at whose sight
Those other phantoms dwindled and took
flight.

Alas, for thee and me, my little brown head!
Have I then lured thee into snares of
sorrow?
Was it for this, for this, the long days led
My weary steps to that divinest morrow,
That golden hour,
When the sealed bud broke to the perfect
flow'r?
How may I foil those Evils, little brown head?

How may I blunt the weapons they are shaping
To wound thee sore? Mine eyes uncomforted
Can see no crevice for our joy's escaping.
What! shall we two
Quail and surrender, then, as others do?

No! let us fight and face them, little brown head,
Through desperate battle waxing ever bolder,
Selling our life-blood dear. Yea, I being dead,
Should I forego the conflict? At thy shoulder,
Yet will I wield
A broken sword in the unequal field.

Thus upon Fate we trample, little brown head;
Her promises and threats, alike unstable,
Shall rift and shift before us: in her stead
Stands Love unconquered and unconquerable,
Clad all in fire,
Opening the doorways of the heart's desire.
So to the end. . . . What foe shall make or mar
That plenitude of peace, when, warfare ended,

Wild thyme and clover and the evening star
Keep watch above us, in one dreaming blended?
When I and thou
Lie hushed, close, close together, even as now.

HUNGARIAN FOLK SONG

The white rose-petals in the dust
  Are falling, falling.
I weep, I weep, because I must;
  Another weds my rose to-day.
And in the wood the violins are calling.
    Haste, fiddler, haste!
    Play, fiddler, play!
    A wedding should be blithe and gay!
And in the wood the violins are calling.

The shepherds' reed-pipes o'er the plain
  Are calling, calling,
My star is quenched in bitter pain,
  Yet in my heart I hide its ray.
And through the night the lonely stars are falling.
    Haste, fiddler, haste!
    Play, fiddler, play!
    A wedding should be blithe and gay!
And through the night the lonely stars are falling.

CROCUS

Gold flame and silver flame,
  Burning through the mould,
In the east wind's scornful breath,
  When the world's a-cold:
Fiery from the earth's red heart,
  Leap they to the light,
Gold flame and silver flame,
  Crocus yellow and white.

Look, you starveling wayfarers,
  Shivering as you go,
Watching lest the leaden sky
  Break in blinding snow:
See the gray, the iron soil,
  Cleft by sudden heat!
Gold flame and silver flame
  Flicker at your feet.

Torches of the tiny year,
  Cressets put to mark
Pathways where the spring may tread,
  Groping through the dark:
Fires to warm the frozen heart,
  Candles rare and small,
Gold flame and silver flame
  Glow beside the wall.

Shall they smoulder into dust,
  Sink in embers gray?
Shall their gleam, in ashes lost,
  Wither all away?
Oh, they mount, some night of stars,
  From the prisoning sod —
Gold flame and silver flame
  Light the halls of God!

Solace of earth is all too rare to seek,
  Celestial pity all too far to find.
But thou, stroking the tear-wet cheek,
  Thou vast and solitary wind,
Over waste land and wide unvoyaged sea,
Come, fold me round — come, clasp and comfort me!

The secret ways wherein thou roam'st, I know,
  By ruined fortress and forgotten grange,
Amongst whose echoes thou dost go,
  Wakening old voices sad and strange,
Or with faint pipe dost climb the pasture steep,
Shepherd invisible of cloudy sheep.

In thee the martial melodies elate
  Of battleward troops that tramp the trembling earth:
The tragedy of human fate,
  The irony of human mirth:
The songs the mother, and the lover, sings:
The child's immortal joy in mortal things.

The tiniest shell upon the widest shore,
By desolate quays where none shall disembark,
Thou hast kissed to-night: thy wings explore
The ultimate reaches of the dark:
Yet thou to-night, thou lordly wayfarer,
Shalt be my comrade and my comforter!

THE SONG OF THE TINKER

I am the man of pot and pan,
I am a lad of mettle;
My tent I pitch by the wayside ditch
To mend your can and kettle;
While town-bred folk bear a year-long yoke
Among their feeble fellows,
I clink and clank on the hedgerow bank,
And blow my snoring bellows.

I loved a lass with hair like brass,
And eyes like a brazier glowing;
But the female crew, what they will do,
I swear is past all knowing!
She flung her cap at a ploughman chap,
And a fool I needs must think her,
Who left for an oaf the mug and loaf,
And the snug little tent of a tinker.

But clank and clang, let women go hang,
And who shall care a farden?
With the solder strong of a laugh and a song
My mind I'll heal and harden.

My ways I'll wend, and the pots I'll mend,
For gaffer and for gammer,
And drive my cart with a careless heart,
And sit by the road and hammer!

Scarlet and crimson, purple, rose, and gold,
What hues are these that mock the morning skies?
What squandered rainbow wealth of Tyrian dyes,
What dazzling raiment, wrought in regal mould,
Do these luxurious prodigals unfold?
"In me magnificent," each blossom cries,
"The pride of life, the lusting of the eyes,
The pomp and glory of Day thou shalt behold!"

But one white poppy in her cup doth keep
More spells than all her splendid sisters know —
And mystery distils upon her breath,
And drowsy spells she murmurs long and low —
The sentinel that guards the gates of sleep,
The mistress of the Night, and dreams, and death.

The grasses swiftly growing, growing by
night and day,
Ripe for the mid-June mowing, filled with
green lights and gray,
Sang in the morning splendour, sang in the
moonlight dew
A little song of tender prediction as they grew.

Some: "'Neath the great barn gable, where
the white owl doth fly
When granary and stable in fragrant stillness
lie —
Where elder-boughs lean over, white on the
rickyard wall,
In the city of wheat and clover shall stand
our castles tall."

Some: "To the wood-recesses where toil
and longing cease,
The green wood-wildernesses, roofed in and
paved with peace,
The happy birds shall take us — soft leaves
below, above —
And with sweet haste shall make us the very
house of Love."

And some: "For our possessing shall be a
fairer fate:
Though ye be blest and blessing, a dearer
doom we wait:
The wandering gypsy mother, weary and way-
distrest,
On us, and on none other, shall lay her child
to rest."

I

Gold aglow on the gorse,
And kingly purple over the heather;
And lilies on the river's course
Lifting their silver cups together.
Lullaby and hushaby!
The wayfaring day is o'er;
Thou and I, together we lie
In the House of the Open Door:
But for thee and for me, my child,
Wandering folk and poor,
There is treasure untold on meadow and moor,
When the wind blows wild.

Gold aflame on the corn,
And queenly crimson deep in the heather;
And diamonds of the dew at morn,
Flashing their rainbow drops together.
Lullaby and hushaby!
The wayfaring day is o'er;
Thou and I, together we lie
In the house of the Open Door:
But for thee and for me, my child,

Wandering folk and poor,
There are jewels of price on meadow and moor,
When the wind blows wild.

Gold alight in the sky,
And royal red in the heart of the heather;
And all the night the stars go by,
Waving their silver swords together.
Lullaby and hushaby!
The wayfaring day is o'er;
Thou and I, together we lie
In the House of the Open Door:
But for thee and for me, my child,
Wandering folk and poor,
There are dreams of delight on meadow and moor,
When the wind blows wild.

II

The Romany baby lies in a red-rose cup,
Where all the mice on the moor could not creep up,
For my kirtle red
For his cradle is spread,
Slung in the tent by the fire where the gypsies sup.

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

The Romany baby lies in a lily white,
To the song of the wind by day and the wind
by night:
For his swaddling clothes
Are fair as the snows
That cover the circling hills with a rim of light.

The Romany baby lies in a russet leaf,
Shut in for ever and ever from joy or grief,
Whom the earth receives
With the other dead leaves,
Whose stay on the desolate branches was —
ah, so brief!

THE SMOCK-FAACED SHEPHERD

[Isle of Wight]

I've thart it out, and I sartainly 'lows
  Bess Dore is the girl for me;
There edn't another from Chale to Cowes
  As is fit to be named wi' she:
Her eyes is quick as a vannerhawk's,
  Her voice have the kindest tone,
And when she's laughen, or when she talks,
  'Tes soft as a wood-quest's own.

But for arl I zees and arl I knows,
  No vorrarder does I drive:
For in zight o' she my spache it goes,
  And I zims but half alive;
Wi' looks and smiles though she sweetly tole,
  I wiggles from left to right,
Just like zome molledy-dowsty-poll
  A-blunderen round the light.

I left a tutty so neat and smarl
  'Longzide of her neckle door,

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

Of bethwine blossoms and yallow-carl,
  And cammick from off the moor.
I bound en up wi' the shackle-ring
  As haps the gate o' the voold;
But I heard the birds in the vuzbrake zing,
  "Goo fetch her a ring o' goold!"

At whiles we meets in some zidelen spot,
  Her dubersome step draas near,
She prid-nigh stops, as it med be what
  There's summat her'd like to hear.
But, tell her more than a "Marnen, you!"
  I cannot, upon my zoul!
She goes her ways, and the shinen blue
  Grows black as a cotterul pole.

I finds a overner t'other night,
  A-coorten her down by barn:
A pussikey veller wi' cuffs o' white,
  And a vine flitch tongue to yarn:
It turn'd me zwivety hearen en mag,
  But I zays to myself, Let be:
She'll furl en away like a mallishag —
  Her can zee droo the likes o' he!

At night I zaamers along the lay,
  Like any wold swaailen hen;
I meditates long on words to say,
  And they comes quite suant then.

There edn't a sheep inside the zools
  But's happier var than me:
Oh! why did the Lard make men zuch vools,
  And maidens zo vair to see?

COLUMBINES

White wings flutter from out of the West,
  Silver and gold in the heart of the sky:
The birds of one feather go homeward together,
  Ring-doves and rock-doves, for night-time is nigh;
While out of the nest
  The little ones croon,
"Come, soothe us to rest,
  Come soon, soon!"

White wings cloudily sweep from the West,
  Over the garden where columbines grow,
All clustered together, like birds of one feather,
  With pinions and plumage of silver and snow:
And the birds in their nest,
  They twitter and croon,
"O night, bring us rest,
  Come soon, soon!"

White wings beat from the East to the West,
  Souls flying home to the portals of pearl:
Like birds of one feather they hasten together

To the Paradise-gardens where pinions
may furl;
And to mortals distrest,
They murmur and croon,
"Come home to your rest —
Come soon, soon!"

THE LAST

This is the last one dream I hold —
This dream I send —
Wrought of dead leaves, that once were fairy gold
You helped to spend.
You were the loom and you the weft
Of every dream: now none are left;
I and my dreams were all too poor, too few
For you.

This is the last one word unsaid,
This word I send;
Although the music of my lips be fled,
Now all's at end.
Its jarring note, that harshly rings,
Like cadence torn from jangled strings,
Strives against iron fate to sound anew
For you.

This is the last one rose that's left,
This rose I send:
Although my empty garden lie bereft,
Where bare boughs bend;

As I have given my rest, my best,
My fairest and my costliest,
All that I had, or could, or hoped, or knew —
For you!

O' stormy nights, be they summer or winter,
  Hurricane nights like these,
When spar and topsail are rag and splinter
  Hurled o'er the sluicing seas,

To the jagged edge where the cliff leans over,
  Climb as you best may climb;
Lie there and listen what mysteries hover,
  Haunting the tides of Time.

* * * * *

The crumbling surf on the shingle rattles,
  The great waves topple and pour,
Full of the fury of ancient battles,
  Clamant with cries of war.

The gale has summoned, the night has beckoned —
  Lo, from the east and west,
Stately shadows arise unreckoned
  Out of their deeps of rest!

Wild on the wind are voices ringing,
  Echoes that throng the air,
Valiant voices, of victory singing,
  Or dark with sublime despair.

To the distant drums with their rumbling hollow,
The answering trumpets blow:
War-horn and fife and cymbal follow,
From galleys of long ago.

The crested breaker, on reef and boulder
That swirls in cavernous black,
Carries a challenge from decks that moulder
To ships that never came back.

The gale that swoops and the sea that wrestles
Are one in their wrath and might
With the crash and clashing of armed vessels,
Grinding across the night.

Out of the dark the broadsides thunder,
Clattering to and fro:
The old sea-fighters, the old world's wonder,
Are manning their wrecks below.

You shall smell the smoke, you shall hear the crackle,
Shall mark on the surly blast
Rush and tear of the rending tackle,
Thud of the falling mast.

With the foam that flies and the spray that spatters,
Scourging the strand again,
A terrible outcry leaps and shatters —
Tumult of drowning men.

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

The steep gray cliff is alive and trembles —
  Was never such fear as this!
A fleet, a fleet at its foot assembles
  Out of the sea's abyss.

It quails and quivers, its grassy verges
  Vibrant with uttermost dread:
It knows the groan of the laden surges,
  The shout of the deathless Dead.

In a rolling roar of reverberations,
  Marching with wind and tide,
Heroes of unremembered nations
  Vaunt their immortal pride.

Briton, Spaniard, Phœnician, Roman,
  Gallant implacable hosts —
Locked in fight with a phantom foeman,
  Gather the grim sea-ghosts.

Brown sods and clods that ope your door
To let green armies through,
A barren woman, here once more
I turn dull eyes on you.
Let me but slough this tedious flesh, and cast
My free desires upon their flight at last!

And I will be the wind of spring,
To quicken bulb and root,
To bid each numb and dormant thing
Conceive and bring forth fruit,
To wake waste lands, fulfilling all their dreams,
With tiny prattle of the dancing streams.

And I will be the April sun,
With living light to wrap
The baby seeds, laid one by one
In earth's warm mother-lap —
And through my morning-gold or evening-red
Watch their sweet growth and waxing goodlihead.

And I will be the rainbow show'r,
With tiptoe feet to pass

Where these my babes of leaf and flow'r
Sleep in the lengthening grass,
And touch so tenderly on lip and brow
Their exquisite faces — God, Thou knowest
how!

When thou shalt stand, a naked shivering soul,
Stripped of thy shows and trappings, made most bare
Of all the fleshly glory thou didst wear —
And hear the thunder of God's judgment roll
Above thy head; while to their hard-won goal
His own elect ascend the golden stair —
What plea wilt proffer, when, too late for pray'r,
Of thy lost life thou see'st the sum and whole?

"I have no armour dinted by the fight,
No broken sword, no casque with cloven rim;
Was none to witness to the grisly sight,
For all alone we strove in darkness dim;
Yet in the Valley of Death, O Lord, one night,
I met Apollyon and I vanquished him."

Thou little Child with naked feet
That walkest in the noisy street,
Whence comest Thou, and whither goest?
Say, if Thou knowest.

By muddy kerb and flaring gas,
I see Thy tiny footsteps pass;
On sodden face and ragged singer
Thy wide eyes linger.

Thou stay'st not by the windows bright,
That flaunt their gaudy wares to-night:
From gold and gems that show so bravely,
Thou turnest gravely.

Nor dainty food nor glittering toy
Allure Thy glance, Thou little Boy:
Oh, where bare-headed dost Thou wander,
On what dost ponder?

Then said the Child: "In wind and wet
I seek and seek a dwelling yet:
Here is no stable and no manger
For Me the stranger.

"The flower-girl on whose tawdry gown
The drops of rain are soaking down —
Beneath her tattered shawl, unbidden,
Whiles have I hidden.

"The shabby, weary, faded folk,
Bowed down beneath the accustomed yoke,
With coarsened hands and faces hollow,
Homeward I follow.

"And I will enter all unknown
Across their dingy threshold stone:
Poor, tired, obscure, they shall be blest there,
For I will rest there."

When as my child was ten days old,
  Beside his tiny cot I laid
My slender wedding-ring of gold
  Upon a table white-arrayed:
Cakes and fruits moreover,
  And a piece of silver money,
  And a pot of mountain honey.
Smelling of thyme and clover,
  And three new almonds there-within,
  The Fairy Ladies' grace to win.

So when I knew he soundly slept
  As any blossom pink and small,
Behind the curtain-fold I crept,
  And watched to see what should befall:
And presently a brightness
  About the doorway kindled,
  So that the firelight dwindled; —
Then came, all clad in whiteness,
  The Ladies Three, and stood and smiled,
  Looking upon my little child.

Then said the first, "This fruit and cake
  I claim — that he may hunger sore."
The second said, "This coin I take,
  Poverty he shall know therefore."

The third one, reaching over,
Took the ring, laughing lightly,
"New sorrows daily and nightly
Shall pierce the hapless lover.
Now have we left him void and bare
Unto the bitter world's cold air!"

Then was I torn 'twixt grief and rage,
Whether to curse them there and die,
Who robbed my dear's poor heritage,
And bid him cold and hungry lie —
Or to kneel down before them,
And pray them for repentance
Of this their cruel sentence —
And with wild words implore them,
And with a mother's anguish plead,
To change the doom they had decreed.

But suddenly there seemed to wake
A music like a silver bell:
And if they sang, or if they spake,
Or if I dreamed, I cannot tell —
A singing and a ringing,
Like rivers murmuring lowly,
Like wind-rocked pine-trees slowly
Their woven branches swinging,
Filled all the room: and one did stand
With the honey-jar in her right hand.

Then said the first, "This child I dower
With fragrance of the mountain thyme,

And sweetness of the clover-flower,
Set in imperishable rhyme."
The next, "And in his hearing
Shall bees be ever humming,
In filmy flight still coming
With drowsy sounds endearing."
The third, "I give the glory and glow
Of yon great sea that rolls below."

"Sleep soft," they sang, "thy little lips
Not yet in deathless song shall stir,
Not yet thy rosy finger-tips
Shall touch or lute or dulcimer:
Weaned from the world's gross pleasure,
By pain and fast made worthy,
Eternal fame waits for thee,
And everlasting treasure.
Then shalt thou greet us where we dwell
On our clear heights — till then, farewell!"

The little white-robed choristers
  Descended one by one:
The organ thundered and grew still —
  Evensong was done.

Pillar and shrine and monument
  Withdrew themselves in gloom:
But high in the west the rose-window
  Glowed like a rose in bloom.

Silence descended as a cloud,
  Silence: alone there stirred,
In the east-window's blazonry,
  The small wings of a bird.

It beat against the purple and gold,
  The crimson and the blue;
It strove for the dim boughs without,
  Darkness and the dew:

As though a soul not ripe for heaven
  Itself therein should find,
And beat against the bars of gold
  For its old love left behind.

All things that ask for proof
Lie needless and aloof:
  Hearing has failed,
  And sight is veiled —
    What is, is but what seems:
  And, gray from head to heel,
  The Night sits at her wheel,
Spinning beneath a shadow-roof
    Her distaff full of dreams.

The world is left without,
Incredibly shut out,
  No faintest speech
  From it may reach,
    No show of farthest gleams.
  The essential facts are left,
  In magic warp and weft,
Wherewith the Night hath hung about
    Her distaff full of dreams.

A fragrance warm and dense
Nameless unto the sense,
  Hangs in deep drift
  That does not lift,

O'er muffled fields and streams
So, in that breath of love
And the strange hints thereof,
The Night sits ever, winding thence
Her distaff full of dreams.

Those dreams — in long-drawn mist
Of pearl and amethyst —
Each, one by one,
In secret spun
Of scents and filmy beams,
Are all of you, of you —
But baseless all? Ah, who
Knows, save the Night? Yet have I kissed
Her distaff full of dreams.

OBLATION

I am the glass wherein you see
Your own poor heart eternally —
    I pray you, then, for pity, take it;
And — since this end must surely be
The only end for you and me —
        Break it!

I am the flower whose bloom shall shed
Its sweetness on you, living or dead —
    Against your lips, I pray you, brush it;
Then — since this end must surely be
The only end for you and me —
        Crush it!

I am the wine that fills your veins
With bitter joys and exquisite pains —
    Lo, my heart's cup! I pray you, taste it;
Then — since this end must surely be
The only end for you and me —
        Waste it!

I am the light that shall illume
Your very soul from out my tomb,

Though there with tears of blood you
drench it;
But — since this end must surely be
The only end for you and me —
Quench it!

POPLARS

They are not as the other trees;
Apart, aloof, austere,
Mute of a thousand mysteries,
They guard the crescent year;
Only a waft of fleeting breath
Makes answer to the rain —
A few brief words the poplar saith,
And then is still again.

When oak and elm on sultry eves
Drowse in a full-fed sloth,
When hazels hardly lift their leaves
Out of the undergrowth,
The poplars murmur each to each,
Bending tall brow to brow;
In what remote, immortal speech
Are they conversing now?

To the least movement of the air,
Their supple shapes respond:
Although their visible forms be there,
Their souls dwell far beyond:
Their thoughts, on upper currents borne,
A pilgrimage do go,
Seeking the mountains of the morn,
The springs of afterglow.

In some ethereal, thin Gulf-stream
    Of influence most sweet,
Some immemorial drift of dream
    That trends about their feet,
The poplars stand; and yet, who knows?
    If one should listen well,
Some careless whisper might disclose
    The secret poplar-spell.

BALLAD OF FOULWEATHER JACK

Admiral Byron has weighed his anchor,
And put to sea in a gale;
But deep in his heart is a hidden canker,
Because of an oft-told tale.
Brave he may be, deny it who can,
Yet Admiral John is a luckless man;
And the midshipmen's mothers cry, "Out, alack!
My lad has sailed with Foulweather Jack!"

Admiral Byron has hoisted his pennant,
And steered for Cape Breton shore:
But the surgeon says to the first lieutenant,
"We shall never see Spithead more!
Weather-beaten and battle-scarr'd,
To Plymouth Hoe or to Portsmouth Hard,
The crews return — but they never come back
Who sign and serve with Foulweather Jack!

"Many a frigate has he commanded,
In every storm that's blown:
He would fight with a squadron single-handed,
But his luck is the devil's own:
He loses the wind, he misses the tide,
He shaves the rocks, and his shots go wide;
The fate is curst and the future black,
That hangs o'er the head of Foulweather Jack.

"As for me, I'm a tough old stager,
Nor care if I sink or swim,
But when I think of the stranded *Wager*,
My heart is heavy for him.
Round the world to ruin and wreck
He carried his luck on the *Dolphin's* deck:
If ever a man had the gift and knack;
Of sheer disaster, 'tis Foulweather Jack!"

As a sea-gull's wings o'er the surges flutter,
In the light of the sunset flame,
There hovered from westward a hasty cutter,
To speak with the frigate *Fame*.
"Twenty Parley-voo ships to-day
Lurk and loiter in Chaleur Bay;
Like wolves they gather to make attack
On the ships and convoy of Foulweather Jack.

"Frigates three for your three are biding,
And of arm'd privateers a score;
Sloops and schooners at anchor riding,
Are waiting you close in shore;
Their guns are many, and yours are few;
Eight to one they outnumber you:
The wind is slow and the tide is slack,
But you yet may escape them, Foulweather
Jack!"

The Admiral stood six foot and over,
He was stately and stern to see:
But his eyes lit up like those of a lover,

And merry of mind was he:
And the Byron blood and the Berkeley blood
Burned in his veins like a fiery flood,
And his pulses leaped, and his comely face
Glowed with the pride of a fighting race.

The Admiral laughed with the wind's own laughter,
And spoke with the sea's own might,
"From danger and death, and what comes after,
No Englishman turns in flight:
They call me unlucky,— to-day you'll learn
How the worst of luck for a time may turn:
We'll rid the seas of this vermin-pack,
And I'll be huntsman!" quoth Foulweather Jack.

The twilight sank and the darkness settled,
The Admiral's frigate led:
She took the waves like a steed high-mettled,
And thus to his men he said:
"Desperate measures for desperate needs,
And valorous crews for dare-devil deeds:
A goodly quarry we have in track —
Clear the decks for action!" says Foulweather Jack.

All through the night were the sea-birds soaring
Shrieking and scared from rest:
All through the night the guns were roaring
Under the sea-birds' nest.

BALLAD OF FOULWEATHER JACK

When morning broke in a glimmer gray,
There was dreadful silence in Chaleur Bay —
Only the crackle of burning decks,
And cries for succour from crowded wrecks.

The *Bienfaisant* is aground and blazing,
And sunk is the proud *Marchault:*
The privateersmen aghast are gazing
At their vessels that burn a-row;
The staggering smoke that volleys and blows
Shrouds the shattered *Marquis de Marlose,*
And the sloops and schooners in rout and wrack
Strew the pathway of Foulweather Jack.

The prisoners question in fear and wonder,
"What fiend have we fought to-day?
We are burnt and splintered and split in sunder,
Who boasted him soon our prey.
He grappled and boarded us, one to ten,
But he and his crew are devils, not men:
Curs'd be the hour when we crossed the track
Of this — how do you call him? — Foulweather Jack!"

Admiral Byron has counted his losses,
And steered for Cape Breton shore;
The baulks and spars that the wild wave tosses,
Last night they were ships of war.

The wounded men in the cock-pit dim
With feeble voices huzza for him:
"The stars may fall and the skies may crack—
But my luck is broken!" says Foulweather
Jack.

Father is a townsman, mother from the far
Green southern uplands where wealthy pastures are:
My kith and my kindred are prosperous and sleek,
Who feed well and work well and thrive all the week.

But somewhere and sometime, many a year ago,
There was a gypsy woman, that right well I know,
A wild dark woman from the moor and wold,
Who bare me an ancestor in days of old.

They hushed up her memory, hid her name away,
Thought they had done with her for ever and a day —
Yet hath she left a heritage that none else shall win,
Whereunto my wandering feet have entered in.

For surely when the dead leaves scatter down the street,
With a rush and rustle, like little flying feet,—

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

When the sou'-west wakens, and with scared
looks askance
The townsfolk hasten from the storm's ad-
vance,—

My whole soul sickens with a fierce desire,
Stress of sudden longing sets my blood on
fire,
For the wind on the hill-top in a lonely
place,
And the cold, soft raindrops blowing on my
face;

For the steep-hung hedges of the winding
road,
And the forest pathway by the stream o'er-
flowed;
For the storm-swept heather where the black-
cock whirs,
And the salt wind whistles through the
stunted firs;

For the brown wood-water, and the brown
field's smell,
And the wide sea-marshes where the curlews
dwell:
For the moorland black against the last red
light,
And the sunk reef's breakers brawling to the
night.

Hide within your houses with your glaring
gas!
Mine shall be the peat-smoke in the beech-
roofed grass:
Count your sordid silver, tell your grimy
gain —
Mine shall be the treasures of the wind and
rain!

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

When at the last my Youth and I shall part,
Who now already waxes weary of me,
Seeing the skies grow ashen-gray above me,
And toward the dim horizon turns in heart,
To sapphire seas whereof the secret chart
Is lost for ever — Shall the parting move me
To anguish, for that Youth forgets to love me,
And stab my soul with bitter sting and smart?

Return not, Youth, to those sweet vanished years,
The dewy, flowery fields that lie behind thee,
But haste before, and climb heaven's golden stair,
And stand in God's own house — that I may find thee,
Purged of regret and comforted from tears,
When my slow faltering feet o'ertake thee there.

We must be strong. However hard,
The burning words you shall retard,
The aching arm you shall deny,
While you are you and I am I.

Shut up in silence all the speech
That lifts the veil from each to each —
Suppress the eloquent swift sigh —
For you are you and I am I.

Deflect the look that means so much —
Withhold the brief sweet thrill of touch —
The poignant moment — pass it by:
For you are you and I am I.

Lest haply in some moment's space
Fate should our barriers all efface,
And one fierce flame, that cleaves the sky,
Fuse us — consume us — you and I!

TRIO

The nightingale sang softly in the wood,
As though a thousand flowers had just found speech —
A strange, sweet tongue that only is understood
In faery lands no mortal road may reach.
"How shall the glory fail
Of my immortal tale,
Or any silence o'er my song prevail?"

The evening star upon the edge of night
Hung like a dewdrop on a dark leaf's rim,
Throbbed like a heart o'er-brimmed with pure delight,
Gathering new splendour while the skies grew dim.
"How shall my beauty fade,
Who in the May-night's shade
Henceforth am an eternal brightness made?"

But the sea sighed through all its depths of gray,
The sea complained on every lonely shore:

"Too well I know your fate, ye joys of May,
Heard and beheld so many a time before!
Your passionate faith is vain —
I only, I remain,
When light and song are fled for evermore!"

Within the secret gates of Paradise,
That stand between the sunset and the dawn,
In visions I have passed, not once nor twice,
And seen the happy souls, from earth withdrawn,
Quiescent there,
In the pure languor of the expectant air.

The place is all a garden, as you know,
Greenness and graciousness and colour and scent;
Blossoming trees of gold and fire and snow,
To blossoming earth with their dear burden bent;
And filmy spray
Of fountains chiming in the shadows gray.

And flowers whose very splendour cries aloud,
And flowers in dark recesses burning deep,
And lesser loveliness in starry crowd,
Head laid to head like little ones asleep;
And vistas dim
Of branches pencilled on the horizon's rim.

But in a region by the westward wall,
In sunny ways and less-frequented lands,
There I have found some gardens, very small,
Tended, for sure, by small and artless hands,—
Quaint plots that lie
All disarranged in sweet unsymmetry.

There weeds and seeds are held in equal worth,
The tall herbs and the groundlings grow together,
Rising, like Ilium, to such music-mirth
As brooklets babble in the blue May weather;
And round each border
Are pebbles set in careless careful order.

For they that do each childish garden till,
With serious eyes waiting an outcome fit,
The little exquisite folk, they have no skill,
To dig and sow, to prune and water it.
They do their best,
With toil pathetic: chance supplies the rest.

And none there is to hinder or to aid:
Birds of a feather, all these doves take flight,

Through the still sunshine or the tranquil shade,
Fluttering around their gardens of delight;
They kneel, they bend,
They labour gaily till the day's rose-end.

And I have heard the baby footsteps run —
Along the pathways they have pattered by —
That sound which whoso hears, henceforth has done
With all that earth can proffer or deny —
Whose echo veers
Down the void loneliness of silent years.

And I have seen your tiny fingers touch,
Heart of my heart! each slim and dainty stem;
Those puny flowers whereof you make so much,
O God, how I have looked and envied them!
Watching your smile,
That only they have known, this long long while.

Now when the friendly gates for me unfold,
I shall forget the boughs of snow and fire;

For recompense of all mine anguish old,
Give me the gladness of fulfilled desire —
Let me but go,
Good Father! where the Little Gardens grow.

At morning from the tender blue,
Towards your bed —
"I am the sunlight pure and true;
Good-day and brightest hours to you,
Golden-head!
And I will wake and make you cheer
Of dawn's delight the live-long year,
Dearest dear,
Sweetest sweet,
Golden-head!"

At evening from the dusky blue,
Towards your bed —
"I am the moonlight pure and true;
Good-night and lovely dreams to you,
Golden-head!
And I will hold and fold you fast
In happy sleep till night be past,
Dearest dear,
Sweetest sweet,
Golden-head!"

At all times from the glory above,
Softly shed,
"I am the light of God's own love,

Blessing and bliss to you, white dove,
Golden-head!
And I will wrap and lap you warm
From irk and ill, from wind and storm,
Dearest dear,
Sweetest sweet,
Golden-head!"

THE WIDOWER

[Isle of Wight]

I often 'lows I must goo zote,
Since my wold 'ooman died:
There's not a zoul to stitch my cwoat,
He hangs in tatters at my zide;
I can't a-bid the harses whup,
I scuffs arl mum behind the plough:
'Twould take a zight o' triggen up
To zet me gooen now.

Her voice I hreckon 'twarn't too sweet,
Her'd yoppul, yoppul, arl day long:
But yet I mind her could repeat
Full many a merry good wold zong.
Nigh every week we'd come to words —
Her tongue could wag, the Lord knows how —
I'd think 'twere like a charm o' birds
To hear en waggen now.

There's nowt to speak to but the cat,
A titchy beast more spit than purr,
She quots in chair where missus zat,
And looks the very daps o' her.

The mice run round the cupboard door,
The rats are skicen to and frow —
She ain't no heart as heretofore
To goo a-hunten now.

Wold 'ooman warn't no slackumtrance,
As leaves her kitchen in a harl:
She kep' en just so spick and spance,
From kittle-led to kite-wood bar'l;
And if I comed in drillen wet,
And floor got stabbled, she did scrow!
I'd fairly laugh for fun of et,
To zee her firken now.

Well, now I feeds on raams and brocks,
And tough wold callards not half-biled:
I've savens in the money-box,
But none to leave't to, chick nor child:
I'm arl a-bivver wi' the cold,
And twickered-out wi' one day's plough:
I 'lows I must be getten wold —
I'll soon zee missus now.

IN HENRY THE SEVENTH'S CHAPEL

Here where the splendid sinners sleep unshriven,
And here, where the saints unknown have trod,
Innumerable companies of angels
Look down from the lattices of God.

They crowd within their rose-engirt embrasures,
Their wings furled to rest that were so fleet:
The cold gray stone, the guardian of oblivion,
Is rounded to roses at their feet.

Beneath the steadfast glory of their gazing —
These wise in the sorrows of the past —
The hurry and glare and glamour of the ages,
Have sunk into somnolence at last.

White watchmen on the silver towers of silence,
They stand since the strenuous years began:
Their eyes are brimmed with pure immortal pity,
Appraising the tawdry worth of man.

IN HENRY THE SEVENTH'S CHAPEL

The roses drop, the vert and or and azure
Are dulled o'er the dwelling of the dead:
The Kings are dust below their grim *Hic jacet*,
The torn flags are mockeries overhead.

The moth and rust may lord it at their leisure,
But hush! walk ye holy ground unshod —
Innumerable companies of angels
Bend down from the balconies of God.

OF SLEEPSHIRE

The hills therein they are high and brown,
And fledged with grasses from foot to crown,
From whose steep sides one may look deep down,
In the happy valleys of Sleepshire.

The vales therein, they are sweet as dreams,
With water-meadows and winding streams,
And twilight glimmers, and flying gleams,
That light the forests of Sleepshire.

The woods therein, they are dark and dense,
With mossy gateway and ivied fence;
And scents of blossoms that issue thence
Fill all the dwellings of Sleepshire.

The dwellings therein, they are low and white,
Where one may whisper the livelong night
With the pale sweet wraith of his heart's delight —
Who only may meet him in Sleepshire.

THE BROWN MAID'S DEFENCE

I am not red and white,
As other women be;
Yet shall you love me well, despite
These russet hues of me:
The precious seed is brown,
Which softly sinketh down
To ripen harvest gold anon,
When summer's roses all are gone.

Mine eyes no sapphires are,
Nor speedwells dipp'd in dew:
Yet forest lakes lie deeper far
Than pools of watchet blue.
No gold my head hath grac'd,
Yet shall my lover taste
Berries and nuts, whose swarthy glow
May cheer the shivering days of snow.

I am not white and red,
As other maids appear:
Yet shall my sombre goodlihead
To you be no less dear:
Where woodlands check the plough,
Brown is each bole and bough,
Whereof are seemly uses made,
When leaves do fall and blossoms fade.

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

Brown is my face, in sooth,
And brown mine arms also;
Yet shall they keep a longer youth
Than red and white may know;
Brown is my gypsy breast,
Yet warm whereon to rest
As Mother Earth's — of whom 'tis sung
That brown she is and ever young.

Cavendish came home from sea with his sails
of the damask green,
All his mariners clothed in silk and splendour
of woven sheen:
England thrilled like a harp to his deeds, and
young blood leaped afire
For the Southern Seas and the Spanish Main
and the fame of the fierce *Desire*.

Drake went down to Darien, and a mighty
hope had he:
"Give me, O God, in an English ship to sail
yon secret sea!"
Fate and the elements leagued his foes, he
swerved not from his quest,
Till he could pasture the *Golden Hinde* on
the treasure of all the West.

Those were the days, the living days, my
masters, an you will!
Of voyaging, of adventuring, might each man
have his fill;

With Cumberland in the *Red Dragon* the vaunting Dons to smite,
Or round the world with Dampier in the *Bachelor's Delight.*

Some in the valiant *Gabriel*, where, under the polar star,
Frobisher skirted frozen shores and perilous lands afar:
Some at the sack of Cadiz saw the *Warspite's* culverins play,
When Raleigh fought the tall *San Philip* all St. Barnaby's Day.

The *Sunshine* and the *Moonshine*, shall their light of renown grow pale,
Wherewith John Davis dauntless first did Arctic waters sail?
Or shall the *Tiger's* orient fragrance fail as the wind-spun foam,
First of all East-Indiamen that carried her spices home?

Blake he prowled by the Kentish Knock, to ambush De Ruyter there,
Boasting himself of his huge three-decker, wonderful past compare:
Black and gold as a wasp she spread her gorgeous wings to the breeze —

The Dutchmen fled from the "Yellow Devil,"
the *Sovraigne of the Seas.*

Anson with a rotten ship and a scurvy-smitten
crew
Lumbered on through the wallowing waves,
with a priceless prize in view:
Riddled with shot she seized her prey, she
fought with her decks aflame —
Like a trumpet-note it cleaves the ages, the
proud *Centurion's* name.

* * * * *

Famous ships, forgotten ships, that once were
in all men's speech,
Their sails to the moth, their nails to the rust,
their timbers rent each from each,
Splintered in sand, mouldered in ooze, broken
and burned they be,
That bore our fathers from strength to
strength, and our flag from sea to sea.

See, like a forest of masts unmoving, black
on the sunset glow,
Phantom outlines of hero-vessels loom from
the long ago;
None to lay their deeds to his heart, they
crowd in oblivion cold,
None to follow their stormy path, while the
careless world grows old.

Who shall number them? who may honour
them? All in a thunderous haze,
Their tattered topsails glimmer out from
battles of bygone days;
The *Swiftsure* vies with the *Arethusa*, praise
undying to share,
And the *Speedy* claims like noble place with
the Fighting *Téméraire*.

Yet two shall stand the flagships of that
gallant immortal fleet,
One lordliest in her triumph, one most glori-
ous in defeat;
Bare your heads to their names, so long as
Englishmen you be —
For one of them is the little *Revenge*, and one
is the *Victory*.

THE SHEPHERD OF DREAMS

I heard one fluting on the moor,
  Across the honeyed heather:
And all the dreams that are drest in gray,
Like running streams at the close of day,
  Went by in a flock together.
They passed the rich, they passed the poor,
  No pasture might delay them —
They lingered not beside my door,
  Who stretched my hands to stay them —
    Flocks of dreams!

I heard one piping on the hill,
  Among the red June clover:
And all the dreams that are decked in gold,
Like delicate gleams when the dawn is cold,
  He counted over and over.
Then each by each, with gesture still,
  With eyes deep-set and serious,
He summoned unto him at will,
  To wend in ways mysterious —
    Flocks of dreams.

I heard one singing down the strand,
  Above the spray-wet shingle —
And all the dreams that are dark and dim

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

As storm-wrack seems on the night's long rim,
I saw in a crowd commingle.
He raised his crook, he waved his hand,
He led their lovely number,
He fed them far in Fairyland,
On shadowy slopes of slumber —
Flocks of dreams.

Shepherd of dreams, O South-west Wind!
Bring all thy cloudy fleeces
Once more to rest in that quiet fold
Within my breast, where they dwelt of old,
When strenuous day surceases.
But one ewe-lamb canst thou not find?
Come, satisfy me straightway!
Call them to-night, thou shepherd kind,
Through mine untrodden gateway —
Flocks of dreams!

The silence of your ultimate thought is mine,
  Beyond the depth that any word can
    reach —
The sacred stillness of the inmost shrine,
  That never yet was marred by mortal
    speech.

And mine the fires that on the altar burn,
  The altar of your spirit, where the dense
Sweet odours deepen. Have you yet to
    learn
  Whose fingers flung that nard and frank-
    incense?

And mine the word that never yet was said,
  The mystic master-word, the key and clue
To all you wish or hope for, living or dead —
  The very meaning of the soul of you.

These all are mine — and mine I swear they
    stand —
  Secret, unsoiled, in veils of love I fold
    them,
Till God Himself shall claim them at my hand,
  And I shall yield them Him for whom
    I hold them.

Beside that twisted thorn
'Twas there at last I sank,
Footsore, forspent, outworn,
Among the grasses rank,
My baby white, I clasped it tight;
Against my breast forlorn.

Beneath that stunted beech,
'Twas there I fell to rest,
Weary beyond all speech,
And the small babe on my breast . . .
I sought to warm its tiny form,
Though I was ice at best.

Under those gnarlëd yews,
'Twas there its little eyes
Closed, in the cold, cold dews,
Under the careless skies.
My kisses wild wake not the child,
But very still it lies.

The road is trodden hard —
Nor leaf nor blade will grow;
The track is seared and scarred;
Whereby my steps did go —
The very grass whereon I pass
Shrivels to brown below.

While the red sunset shuts
  An angry scornful eye,
Rainwater fills the ruts—
  Or is it blood, half-dry?
Where they have trod, my feet unshod,
  And my dead babe and I.

Pilgrim who went this way,
  In olden days devout,
Your phantoms dimly gray
  Compass me round about—
Your holy bands raise beckoning hands
  To me that am cast out.

Around me, through the pale
  Vast reaches of the night,
The fluttering phantoms frail
  Go huddling left and right,
They swirl and swarm, as when a storm
  Puts the dead leaves to flight.

They journey evermore
  To some immortal goal,
Whose sanctities restore
  Rent lives and make them whole—
Some safe retreat, where pity sweet
  Shall heal the broken soul.

"Yond' poor sad wayfarer,"
  They look at me and say,

"What shame withholdeth her.
What anguish doth delay?" . . .
And they are gone: and I creep on
Along the Pilgrim's Way.

I sleep, but my heart waketh — in dreams I go
forth to you,
Green uplands, gray downlands, that once
and of old I knew;
For the voice of my beloved is calling me soft
and low,
The south-wind, the sea-wind, that sang in
the long ago.

For the hills are curving their breasts, and
lifting their lovely shoulders,
Out there against the west, where the red
of the sunset smoulders:
And the plover's wail is keen, and the curlew's
whistle is sharp,
And the long dry grass is vibrant with the
sound of an elfin harp.

Now if you should meet a phantom that
roams on the silent hill,
In the dimness, the duskness, when shadowy
paths grow chill,
Whose head is filled with dew, and whose
locks with the drops of the night —
You will know it is I a-seeking the heritage
mine by right.

For me, for me it has waited, through many
an empty day,
Of dry and dusty labours that squander one's
life away —
The voice of my beloved is poignant above the
din,
Thrilling across the traffic where toilers go
out and in.

Call softer now, call fainter — drop down to
a thread of sound,
For by that thread I am fastened — in cords
of love I am bound —
. . . Green uplands, gray downlands, great
hills that of old I knew,
In a mystery none shall fathom, once more
I am one with you!

Little sweet bud in the dawning gray,
Dancing out to the golden day,
Where did you find your gown so gay,
    Your white, white raiment?
Down below in the dingy soil,
Shut from the weary world's turmoil,
Did you strive and serve, did you labour and
        toil?
    What did you give for payment?

"I dwelt in a house of dreams, my dear,
By a well of joy, in the sweet o' the year,
Where elfin harpers wander anear
    With music tender;
Where fairy weavers, sitting aloof
Under the arch of a rainbow roof,
Deftly fashioned their warp and woof
    Into a garb of splendour."

Magical rose in the noonday blue,
Clad in crimson and fire and dew,
Where were such vestures wrought for you,
    Such robes of wonder?
Did you journey here from a court afar,
Out of the land where rose-kings are,—
Over your travel, the morning star,
    And the glow-worms glimmering under?

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

"I dwelt in a house of dreams, my dear,
Golden-built at the heart o' the year,
Where sunbeams sit by a fountain clear,
Singing and spinning:
There are spun, in a pulsing glow,
Rarer stuffs than the earth may know,
To the wheel's long melody, soft and low,
Without an end or beginning."

Shivering blossom in piteous plight,
Creeping silently out of sight
Into the black of the winter night,
When the last light's failing —
How did you grow so tattered and torn,
Threadbare mantle and sleeves out-worn,—
Where do you go in your rags forlorn,
While the desolate woods are wailing?

"I dwelt in a house of dreams, my dear,
Shadow-built in the dark o' the year,
Close awhile I will rest me here,
From the storm-wind's riot;
Here at the root of the world I lie,
My faded garments are folded by,
Naked I came, and naked go I,
But here shall be home and quiet."

I will not pass through the world as a captive might,
Dragged at the chariot wheels of contemptuous Fate,
Bleeding and prone, bewailing the hour of my birth,
Suffering the buffets of chance, and the fierce despite
Of the grinding years as they roll: by their scornful hate
Crushed like a bruised reed into mouldering earth.

But I will pass through the world as a conqueror should,
Baffled at every turn, yet victorious still,
Breaking the chains of circumstance, shaping mine ends
Out of inimical hours—yea, wresting the good
Out of mine ultimate worst: for the heavenly hill
Is taken by force, and the violent thither ascends.

Baulked by the things unseen, as by evil gods,
Foiled, disappointed, flung down but to rise
again —

Thrones, principalities, powers — shall their
strength avail?
Reckless of failure, and trampling the terrible
odds
Under my feet as I go, I will sing right fain
Of the triumph to come, the triumph that
shall not fail.

Defrauded out of my dues of the earth's
delight,
All doors shut in my face, and each roadway
barred,
Cheated of peace and pleasure and starved
of fame —
Yet will I march into day through the walls
of night,
Fronting a routed universe, battle-scarred,
Colours flying, unsoiled of defeat or shame.

By the crossfire of villainous guns raked stem
to stern,
Staggering onward, smoke-shrouded, with
splintered decks,
Mainmast broken and foremast gone by the
board,—

Yet shall the clashing bells acclaim the victor's return,
As I reach to my moorings at last — as, a wreck of wrecks,
I fight my way into port in the Name of the Lord.

A FLIGHT OF NESTLINGS

The little white angels of God go by in the gloaming,
They flicker and float, with a glimmer of snow-white wings,
With pinions of silver and pearl, like little doves homing,
Aloof and aloft from the soil of our earthly things,
But down by the curtain of silk and the cradle of cedar,
By the mean little basket that rocked the serf's baby to rest,
Comes the wailing, "Ah me, that I dwelt in the tents of Kedar,
With no wings to follow the bird that hath flown from my breast!"

The little white angels of God, like the petals of roses
Blown by on a delicate wind, they are fluttering far:
Like thistledown see where they drift o'er the garden closes,
Upward and onward and beckoned by beams of a star.

But down in the palace of marble that
tow'rs o'er the city,
And down in the hut by the reeds of the
poisonous fen,
Comes the comfortless weeping of Rachel,
"O Father, have pity
On me the forsaken, that childless must
go among men!"

The little white angels of God, they have
gained to the gateway
Where faces of seraphs with tenderest
welcome do throng;
And, folding their pinions of silver, they
enter in straightway,
With cooing and crooning like buds that
have burst into song.
But down on the velvet-hid floor that
no small feet shall tread now,
And down on the bare chilly stones in
the dews of the night,
The sighing wears endlessly on, though
the tears are all shed now,
For the little child-angels of God that
have taken their flight.

THE SEA LULLABY

I listened in the darkness, and I heard,
Low in the lonely night, strange lullabies,
Uttered with sighs of love, with broken sighs,
And here and there the echo of a word:
Some savage mother to her babe might croon
Such rhythmic murmurs 'neath a dropping moon.

It is the Mother, sleepless all night long,
Beside her children's cradle watching well,
That whispers thus her ancient slumber-spell,
That chants her mystic secrecy of song;
Till all the hurry and the noise of day,
Fused in immortal calm, dissolve away.

The wild Sea-Mother, bending o'er her brood,
With tender solace rocking us to rest —
Have you not seen the throbbing of her breast,

And felt her kisses thro' the solitude?
Have you not known, in half-awakening
trance,
The glory of her dark, sweet countenance?

The gates thereof and the walls thereof,
Are wrought of cobwebs frail;
The key it is but a whisper of love,
And the threshold a fairy tale
Shadowy sentinels sleep without,
Clad all in misty blue,
Midsummer wraps it round about,—
It was made for me and you.

The magic spell of the middle June
Is heavy on all the air,
The blackbird sings and the ringdoves croon,
And the soft wind ruffles our hair.
The hay scent and the syringa scent,
The innermost soul they woo —
The sheer delight that can never be spent,
It was made for me and you.

Now if the wall one should dare to scale,
And gaze from its height, he sees
Sinister sights that shall turn him pale,
And loosen his trembling knees,
Tragedy lurks with a wolf-like face,
Deadly disasters brew —
There are smouldering fires at the root o' the place,
That was made for me and you.

The thunder-clouds lie ominous red,
On the low horizon's rim;
The feet of Dread with a measured tread
Draw nigh from the distance dim;
Bolt the gates with a rainbow's end,
Lest ever a fear peep through!
Rosy boughs o'er the garden bend,
That was made for me and you.

Some day — to-day? — the spell may break,
The vision dissolve in doom —
If Fate should a careless finger shake,
'Twould shatter the spires of bloom;
A wintry gust, a shudder of earth,
Would snap the place in two —
Come, clasp the hour for what it is worth —
'T was made for me and you!

Ah, dream we in Fool's Paradise!
So drowsy it is, so dear,
So precious beyond all count or price
The fugitive moments here —
The pleasure poised on a turn of chance,
The sweetness that life holds due,
Wrung from reluctant circumstance —
It was made for me and you!

Roses and kisses, dreams and dews,
Our own for an hour of gold,
So hard to find, so easy to lose,
Between the cold and the cold,

For us, for us, shall all suffice,
    It was made for me and you —
They only mock at Fool's Paradise,
    Who never may win thereto!

Sometimes in dreams I see
The houses of the Lord, not built with hands:
Each mansion that in God's own city stands,
Empty and waiting,
Lifts up its everlasting doors for me.

And some of these are ceiled
With flaming swords, as for some hero's home:
And some for weary souls that long did roam
Are soft be-cushioned:
And some are set in green and lilied field.

But fairest of them all
Are those great houses whereout laughing eyes
From nursery windows look, and sounds arise
Of little voices,
Holding within eternal festival;

And flying glimpses gleam
Of nutbrown locks, of golden curly head,
Of innocent floweret faces, hands outspread
In joyous welcome,
And little feet that dance across my dream.

And rounded rosy limbs
Through cloudy curtains glance and dis-
appear;
And tiny songs, and prattle sweet to hear,
And lovely laughter,
Ringing softly out, and baby mirth o'er-brims.

And there at last I know
The barren woman shall keep house some day,
A joyful mother of children: and shall say,
Sobbing with gladness,
"Past all my hopes, why hast thou blessed
me so?"

ALL SAINTS' DAY

Red leaves against the gray,
That shudder and are still,
What fate do ye fulfil,
Mocked in a king's array?
Your crimson and your gold
In vain ye hope to hold:
Obscure, forgotten, unbewailed
By bitter sighs or bootless tears,
Ye fall and fail: even so have failed
Red leaves through immemorial years.

Red leaves against the gray,
That tremble and disperse,
Your little universe
Is crumbling to decay.
Unreckoned, lost, remote,
On aimless airs ye float:
Yet doth your Maker count you His,
Though mists of death around you press,
And in celestial treasuries
Hides your surrendered loveliness.

Red leaves, against the gray
Ye thrill and glow no more:
Dark through an earthly door

THE WIND ON THE HEATH

Now lies your lonely way —
Ye that awhile so well
Held your green citadel.
Yet hear ye not, far-off and faint,
    Deep unto deep make answer true?
Seraph with seraph, saint with saint,
    Yea, God of God, shall welcome you!

VITA NUOVA

I

Close, close beneath my heart,
Lie still, my joy, nor thence as yet depart!
Lo, in the quiet garden ground
The swelling buds globe to the perfect round—
The little leaves, tendril and blade and curl,
With timid sweet delay themselves unfurl,
The earliest swallows dart.

Close, close beneath my breast,
Lie still, my hidden hope, and be at rest!
The pomps and splendours of the prime
Prepare themselves in their appointed time;
The teeming glories of the full flood-tide,
Whereon June mornings as at anchor ride,
Shall bring thee of their best.

For thee the mid-year's glow,
For thee the sceptred lilies all a-row,
Roses for thee, and swathes of hay,
And sweetness of the long midsummer day,
When happy songs in happier hush are stayed,
And silent bliss holds all the greenwood shade,
And thou, my bud, shalt blow!

II

Last night there was wind and storm,
And white waves wild on the shore;
But the room was quiet and warm,
When a stranger knocked at the door.
Oh, how, in the gusty street,
On the cobblestones slippery-wet,
Through the clattering battering sleet,
Were his delicate footsteps set?

Last night there was storm and wind,
And rattle of icy rain;
But the hearth shone friendly and kind,
When a stranger tapped at the pane.
Through the shivering starless night,
And the field's tempestuous gray,
With shadows to left and right,
Oh, how did he find the way?

Bareheaded and barefoot he,
His shoulders and knees were bare,
In the roar of the raging sea,
And the rush of the whistling air;
But the storm like a dream went by,
And dropped in the dawning glow;
And here doth a stranger lie,
Where none lay a night ago.

My lily, my rose, my dove,
  My golden treasure of joy,
My jewel of life and love,
  My pure little spotless boy!
Unknown but a daylight since,
  My breast is warm to your brow;
Eternity's self, my prince,
  It never can part us now!

III

(*CRADLE SONG*)

Rose and gold and blue of the skies,
Face and curls and innocent eyes,
Sleep, my little one, dream and drowse:
All the birds sit still in the boughs,
The dark blue spaces with stars are sown —
Sleep, my blessing, my love, my own,
Sleep!

Gold and blue and rose of the west,
To the palace of sleep step in, sweet guest!
The sun-spark sinks like a rose-bud furled,
And rose-lights ruddy the restful world;
The ponds are as pitchers of rosy fire —
Sleep, my blossom, my heart's desire,
Sleep!

Blue and rose and gold of the morn,
You shall wake and laugh when the night's outworn,
When dreams go home in the dawning cold,
Suffused with splendour of streaming gold.
Golden head on your pillow so white,
Sleep, my treasure, my soul's delight,
Sleep!

IV

(*THE STORM-CHILD*)

My child came to me with the equinox,
The wild wind blew him to my swinging door,
With flakes of tawny foam from off the shore,
And shivering spindrift whirled across the rocks.
Flung down the sky, the wheeling swallow-flocks
Cried him a greeting; and the lordly woods,
Waving lean arms of welcome one by one,
Cast down their russet cloaks and golden hoods,
And bid their dancing leaflets trip and run
Before the tender feet of this my son.

Therefore the sea's swift fire is in his veins,
And in his heart the glory of the sea;
Therefore the storm-wind shall his comrade be,
That strips the hills and sweeps the cowering plains.

October, shot with flashing rays and rains,
Inhabits all his pulses; he shall know
The stress and splendour of the roaring gales,
The creaking boughs shall croon him fairy tales,
And the sea's kisses set his blood aglow,
While in his ears the eternal bugles blow.

V

(*THE RETURN*)

The buds arrive unto the tree,
  The frost forsakes the sod;
Made straight with joy full soon shall be
  The crooked ways we trod;
The sunbeams march by shore and sea.
  In golden sandals shod —
Comfort ye, comfort ye,
  My people, saith your God.

The sun returns again with all
  His wealth of heretofore,
And doth his ancient state recall
  His golden largess pour;
But I hear a little knocking fall
  From a hand at my heart's door,
So soft and small, O very small,
  That I shall hold no more.

Open the door, small hand, I pray,
  Come in, O noiseless feet:
Bright head, as in a bygone day
  Find safe and sure retreat
Upon my breast: Smile, dear, and lay
  Your arms that they may meet
About my neck, and whispering say
  If slumber-time be sweet.

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